

hackneytoday

Circulated to 108,000 homes and businesses by Hackney Council

Issue 464 14 March 2022



Your guide to
Council Tax, how we
spend your money
and some of the
services you can
expect from your
Council in 2022/23

2022/23 Budget

A fairer recovery for Hackney

www.hackney.gov.uk

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Irish history



Pull out

Our Homes

 Hackney



‘Despite the financial strains, we remain ambitious for the borough’

WE’VE now experienced two traumatic years of the Covid pandemic, and we – as a Council – continue to remember everyone who has died and those impacted by the loss of a loved one.

Residents are experiencing some of the toughest economic impacts in a generation, and the Council will do everything in its power to protect the most vulnerable and the services they depend on.

The pandemic has also taken an unprecedented toll on the Council’s finances. We experienced a serious loss of income and there remains a rising demand in adults’ and children’s social care; and from residents seeking housing

and welfare support. We are also supporting more children with special educational needs.

We continue to suffer from the effects of the criminal cyberattack that affected most of our IT systems – and which cost us millions of pounds. All of our services are currently working again. However, we know some residents continue to be affected by backlogs and I want to assure you that staff are working tirelessly to fix this.

Given the cost of the living crisis, we are also working hard to ensure that the Government’s Council Tax rebate – of £150 to households in Bands A to D homes – is distributed quickly. We’re encouraging residents to sign up to pay Council Tax by Direct Debit to speed up

receipt of this payment.

We have less money now to maintain our services you rely on. This means that, like other councils, we will have to raise Council Tax this year – by 2.99 per cent.

We know any rise can have an impact on those on fixed incomes but it is necessary to fund services – which remain exceptional value-for-money – such as bin collections, street cleaning, social care, youth services, adult and children’s social care and helping homeless people.

This increase is something we do with reluctance – but the Government expects us to and allocates us money on the assumption we do it.

Nearly 30,000 of our most vulnerable households will be

protected through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which also exempts care leavers in Hackney, and of course our discretionary grants. We will also focus on long-term poverty reduction, including tackling holiday hunger, the digital divide and fuel poverty.

Despite the financial strains, we remain ambitious for the borough and continue to deliver for our residents.

In the past year we opened the new Britannia Leisure Centre; started improvements to our town centres; planted thousands of street trees; refurbished play parks and public toilets; hosted pop-up community vaccine clinics to help thousands get their jobs; supported 20,000 families facing

holiday hunger; delivered our first high-needs rough sleeper housing with support scheme; supported hundreds of people into employment, training and apprenticeships; prevented homelessness for 700 households, and assisted 450 people either rough sleeping or at imminent risk of rough sleeping; backed our cultural sector to reopen through a dedicated grant; and made £1m of additional investment in Housing Services to clear the repairs backlog caused by the pandemic.

Philip Glanville

Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney

Our budget challenge

EARLIER this month, councillors and the Mayor agreed the budget for the year ahead, which outlines the investments Hackney Council is making to continue to run essential services and rebuild a greener, fairer, safer and healthier Hackney out of the Covid pandemic.

The budget includes a Hackney Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent. It means most residents will pay less than £1 extra a week, for the Council element of the Council Tax, but will ensure the Council can raise more than £2.7m to fund services for residents at a time when they need them most.

Hackney will continue to have

	Council Tax valuation bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Hackney Council	£850.33	£992.06	£1,133.78	£1,275.50	£1,558.94	£1,842.39	£2,125.83	£2,551.00
GLA	£263.73	£307.68	£351.64	£395.59	£483.50	£571.41	£659.32	£791.18
Total	£1,114.06	£1,299.74	£1,485.42	£1,671.09	£1,958.16	£2,413.80	£2,785.15	£3,342.18

one of the lowest Council Tax rates in London. The Council will work with residents and advice agencies to ensure that eligible, vulnerable households can claim Council Tax discounts and access long-term, affordable repayment plans if they are facing difficulty.

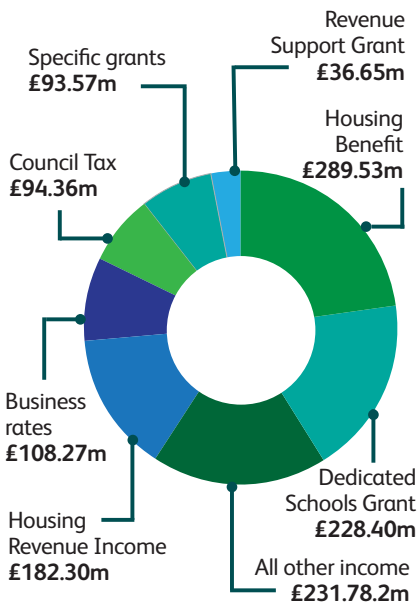
The Council is ensuring more people than ever are eligible for help by using every funding pot available to support those who

have been hardest hit by the events of the past 24 months and the rising cost of living. This is on top of the £1m invested, since 2020, on tackling inequality and poverty in the borough. It is also investing a further £1m in supporting local organisations to provide advice and assistance for those experiencing financial difficulties.

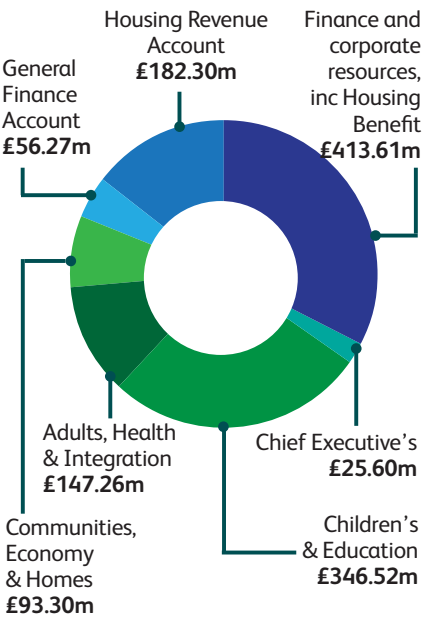
Council Tax allows the Council to continue to provide vital services we

all need, from waste and recycling to parks and libraries; from social care for children and adults to measures to reduce poverty; from resources to tackle the climate emergency to community safety and services and activities for young people; and from helping people find jobs or access training to providing temporary accommodation for homeless residents.

Where our funding comes from...



... and how we spend it



Covid

THE Covid pandemic remains the greatest challenge that Hackney Council, its residents and our local businesses have faced in a generation. The Council’s finances have faced an unprecedented impact with hundreds of millions of pounds diverted to helping residents and businesses who desperately need our help and protecting the community where we can. Our response has prioritised those who need help most and keeping essential services running in immensely challenging circumstances.



Austerity

WE face our greatest challenge against the backdrop of 12 years of austerity. The lives of our residents have been made harder and harder by the rise in a labour market that leaves many in poverty; a failure to regulate the private rented sector; the difficulties of Universal Credit; Covid-19; and now the rising cost of living. Central Government has provided an increase in funding this year but it will not bring us back to 2010 levels in real terms.

£140m

Lost in Government funding. Hackney has suffered the biggest funding cut, per household – £1,459 – of any London borough

Cyberattack

WE continue to suffer from the impact of the criminal cyberattack that affected most of our IT systems. We know this has knocked trust and confidence in the Council. We are making substantial investments in our recovery, accelerating our technology plans and working with industry leading experts to ensure that we have the modern, user-friendly systems we need to continue to improve our services to residents and the best possible cyber protections in place. Throughout our recovery work we have prioritised residents in greatest need – including housing benefits and other financial support.

Our achievements

Here's what we've done despite the challenges



DISTRIBUTED £450,000 to dozens of Hackney venues and organisations as part of the 'Hello Again, Hackney' fund, enabling a wide range of cultural organisations to create discount tickets or provide other incentives for Hackney residents to visit venues, through cultural events or activities

CONTINUED our multi-award winning apprenticeships programme, employing a further 29 local people this year, bringing our total apprentices to more than 100. Delivered the Kickstart programme, creating 249 placements for 18 to 24 year olds with local businesses.

CAMPAIGNED for poverty-related funding from central Government. We have successfully distributed £5.7 million into Hackney over the last 15 months, making sure it reached groups most affected by poverty during holiday periods – including to more than 20,000 children – people struggling to pay fuel bills and people who are in temporary accommodation or are homeless.

OPENED the £40 million City of London Academy, Shoreditch Park – one of the finest school buildings in the country. The new site features a dedicated sixth form centre, state-of-the-art science laboratories, music and theatre facilities, and a sports pitch on its roof.

OPENED The Glass House community venue – available for weddings, civil ceremonies, community classes, meetings and special events all year round – in Springfield Park.

BEEN delivering on commitments to build almost 2,000 new homes between 2018 and 2022, with more than half the homes we build genuinely affordable social rent, shared ownership or Hackney Living Rent homes for local people. Since 2018 we have completed more than 800 new homes, started construction on 170 new homes and received planning permission for over 700 more. In the last year we've completed new homes at Tower Court in Stamford Hill with further new homes under construction at three more sites in Hackney.

OPENED the new, state-of-the-art Britannia Leisure Centre – the biggest public sector investment in the area in a generation. It features five-a-side football pitches on its roof with panoramic views of London, a water flume, two first-class swimming pools, an introduction to water pool, a splash pad, stunning fitness studios, squash courts, a sports hall and a cafe and toilets that also serve Shoreditch Park



RENOVATED children's play areas, including in Clapton Pond and Millfields Park; and refurbished public toilet blocks, including in London Fields, Clissold Park and Haggerston Park

OPENED the first of five extensively renovated buildings in order to provide much-needed modern accommodation for homeless single people in the borough. The majority of the work is self-contained units, with ensuite bathrooms and kitchenettes, and insulation improvements, and with a number of specially designed rooms for those with high needs.

STARTED work on the £3 million upgrade of Hackney Central Station, with a new second entrance to help ease congestion at the increasingly busy station, due to open this spring.

UNVEILED the UK's first permanent, public artwork to honour the Windrush generation in the Narrow Way

BEGUN the £1 million work to improve and safeguard the future of the much-loved Ridley Road Market. Improvements include new stalls, street trees, seating, free public wifi and cashless payment machines.



UNVEILED the newly named Kit Crowley Gardens, under the Council's groundbreaking 'Review, Rename, Reclaim' project – an opportunity to reassess the names of local spaces to ensure they appropriately reflect the diversity of our residents – as part of the Council's commitment to being an anti-racist borough

OPENED the newly refurbished Wenlock Barn Community Hall, with a new kitchen, baby-changing facilities and disabled toilets, as well as a new lift to allow all members of the community to access the building, including those with limited mobility and wheelchair-users.

READ the full Budget report at hackney.gov.uk/budget

Our ambitions

Here's what we aim to do

Rebuilding a better Hackney

THE Council's mission is to rebuild a better Hackney out of the pandemic: to fight for communities who continue to need support, using our powers to create a fairer economy, build a safer borough, and ensure Hackney's recovery is a green one.

Rebuilding fairer

WE ARE explicitly investing more to make Hackney fairer and to ensure Hackney remains a borough for everyone.

Here's how:

- £14 million on homelessness and our housing related support services, including £500,000 on refurbishments and reconfiguration of properties to provide more than 80 flats, including six disabled units, of temporary accommodation in the borough.
- Around £71 million on our regeneration and new Council home-building programmes, as well as £44m on improving and maintaining Council homes.
- £1 million extra to deliver advice services to vulnerable residents of the borough, including those affected by the cost of living crisis.
- Nearly £15 million on education facilities, including refurbishments, school

maintenance including £1.3m on our programme to increase the number of in-borough SEND places.

- £10 million on paying for concessionary fares and supporting families with no recourse to public funds.
- £300,000 investment in the attainment of our young people, specifically for groups that have historically underachieved, to reduce exclusions and assist with the transition between primary and secondary school.

Rebuilding greener

THE Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, and making the borough greener and more sustainable runs through the heart of our budget.

We've committed significant funding for projects and plan to invest £24 million in projects over the next three years to contribute to achieving our net zero target.

We are on course to approve the Council's Climate Action Plan to rebuild a greener Hackney and eliminate our impact on climate change, and creating cleaner, quieter neighbourhoods so our residents can walk, shop, cycle and get around safely. This includes:

- £5.4 million over the next two

CONTINUE our School Streets programme by expanding across the borough – which has brought the total number to 48.



CONTINUE our tree planting programme and will have planted 36,000 new trees in our streets and parks and green spaces (some through charitable partners) by the end of 2022.



- £10m to help make Hackney safer through investment in our Integrated Gangs Unit; enforcement team; focus on hate crime and work to ensure the safety of women in our borough.
- Around £78m on our network of children's centres and associated services, which sit alongside our early intervention and prevention services, as well as supporting our schools to ensure children achieve the best they can. We will also look after children where they cannot be cared for within their family network.
- £13.6m on youth and early help services for families, including our four youth hubs and six adventure playgrounds.
- £35.3m on healthy food, obesity prevention, mental health services, smoking cessation, sexual health and dental health checks for adults; on keeping young children healthy; and on our Covid response, including the vaccine rollout and community champions work.

£3 MILLION into town centre regeneration in Hackney Central and Dalston, including leasing the indoor shopping village at Ridley Road, as well as investment to support our businesses to recover from the pandemic.

in green initiatives across our housing estates.

- £600,000 to deliver 'green screens' in the borough's schools.
- Continuing the Green Homes Fund with a further investment of £217,000 – rolling-out free home insulation, helping lower energy bills for thousands of residents and significantly

reducing the gases produced by heating our homes.

- Continuing to invest in more sustainable transport, making our parks and leisure centres greener and better for users, increasing drinking water fountains.
- We've now installed over 300 electric vehicle charging points, supporting the transition to zero emissions vehicles. We are also set to work with private sector

£4 MILLION on improving our libraries, including £2.65m into Stoke Newington Library.

Help and support

We know there are many people in our borough who are struggling financially, and this will only have become worse as a result of the effects of the pandemic on incomes and job prospects, as well as the rising food and utility prices. That's why we are committed to supporting our most vulnerable – everyone who thinks they

may be eligible for help should get in touch with us now.

Council Tax help

Are you experiencing financial difficulties or are on a low income? The Council could help pay for up to 100 per cent of your Council Tax bill through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the Council Tax Discretionary Fund.

Call: **020 8356 3399**
Search: **'Hackney Council Tax Reduction'**

Crisis Funding

Have you suffered a sudden financial shock or face unexpected costs and require emergency help? The Council's Hackney Discretionary Crisis Support Scheme can provide payments for food, utilities, clothing, white goods and more.

Call: **020 8356 3000** and ask to apply for discretionary crisis support.
Search: **'Hackney Hardship Scheme'**

Support with rent and housing-related costs

Do you need help with your rent arrears, a deposit on a new rental property or to help pay for removals? Hackney Council can top up your housing-related benefit. You must be in receipt of either Housing Benefit

or the housing element of Universal Credit to apply for this help, known as the Discretionary Housing Payment.

Call: **020 8356 3399**
Search: **'Hackney Discretionary Housing Payment'**

For more information about the Council's budget, the Adult Social Care precept and what the Council spends on services, visit: **hackney.gov.uk/budget** or write to:

Council Tax, Hackney Service Centre, 1 Hillman Street, E8 1DY

